How to / Maniaplanet / Manialink / Build a Manialink

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1.3 Register a manialink

To register a manialink, go HERE and read about the procedure.

2. Differences to the Forever ManiaLinks

This chapter of the tutorial is for all of you, who already know the ManiaLinks from Forever with their details, and know want to "upgrade" their knowledge to the ManiaPlanet ManiaLinks. If you just finished in working through the basics of ManiaLinks, go ahead to the next chapter, as this one will not contain any new information you need so far.

Basically, no major things changed from Forever to ManiaPlanet: If you have a Forever ManiaLink, it will work quite well in ManiaPlanet without any changes. Nevertheless, there are some details, which you should know about the ManiaPlanet ManiaLinks. So let's start the Upgrade process...

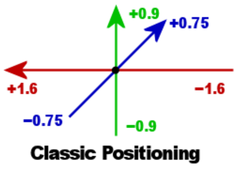
2.1 ManiaLink Version 0 versus Version 1

The main difference to Forever ManiaLinks is the new version, which have been introduced with ManiaPlanet, and which will enable or change the behavior of some features to make them ready for the future. Whereas Forever ManiaLinks (and the oldschool United ManiaLinks) are now called to have version 0, ManiaPlanet ManiaLinks become the version 1.
This version is simply specified in the opening <manialink> tag at the beginning of each ManiaLink, as described at <manialink>. Currently, there are two major features, which will be enabled with having the version 1:

ManiaLinks go Widescreen

ManiaLinks with version 0 have a coordinate system, which is based on a 4:3 screen. The development in the last years, nevertheless, moved on to widescreen monitors, having all ManiaLinks stretched from 4:3 to the widescreen to fill the monitore.

With setting the version to 1, you enable a new coordinate system optimized for 16:9 widescreens. So the new values of the axes of the known positioning systems are as follows:



Classic Positioning

Menu Positioning

The main difference next to the changed ratio and therefor the adjusted values, is the more easy conversion between menu positioning and the classic one. Where in version 0 you had to multiply with 64 to get from classic to menu, now you only need to multiply with 100 to do so, thus only shifting the comma two digits to the right.

Hint: Although ManiaScript works with both Version 1 and Version 0, it always uses the 16:9 coordinate system to calculate any positions. Therefore ensure to always use Version 1 when using a ManiaScript to avoid confusion
Conversion: You can use our **conversion service**, if you want to update your old manialinks.

No Support of line/cell syntax anymore

Raising a ManiaLink to version 1 will disable any support of United ManiaLinks, also known as the line/cell-syntax. This change is not very dramatical, as United ManiaLinks are outdated since the Forever Upgrade, and not used for several years when developing new ManiaLinks. (If you don't know, what the line/cell syntax is, don't worry about this, you won't need it at all for your ManiaLinks in Forever or ManiaPlanet ^^)

If you develop a new ManiaLink for ManiaPlanet, it is recommended to use version 1 to make your ManiaLink ready for the future. Only with the new version, you get the simplified coordinates, which match better to the more used widescreen than the old ones.

2.2 New and changed attributes

Regardless of whether you use version 0 or 1, nearly all elements got new attributes to be used in your ManiaPlanet ManiaLinks. At this point of the tutorial, a short list of all new attributes should be given, for more details, please take a look into the reference in the next part.

List of New and Changed Attributes

- New attribute **version** for <manialink>: Specifies the version of the ManiaLink.
- New attribute **background** for <manialink>: Enables a transparent background for the ManiaLink.
- New value **center2** for valign of all text based elements: Aligns the text slightly different to the known center. Changed values for style and substyle of all style based elements: List of available styles has been adopted to ManiaPlanet, refer to the ManiaLink Exemple to see the new values.
- New Attribute **id** for all positionable elements: Provides access to the element in a ManiaScript.
- New Attribute **ScriptEvents** for all visible elements: Enables additional ManiaScript events to be generated for this element.

2.3 Maniascript integration

One of the big new features of ManiaPlanet, and the biggest change by far of the ManiaLinks, are the so called ManiaScripts. Where Forever ManiaLinks always have been static and unchangeable after they have been printed in the game, ManiaScript now enables to bring more dynamic into them. You are now able to react on the users behavior without reloading the ManiaLink at all: Mouse events are generated as much as most keys will do. If the user moves the mouse cursor over an icon, display a little hint what it does. Place a little "X" on your popup window, to let the user close it... Without realoding the ManiaLink. And these are only very basic examples of what is possible with ManiaScripts in ManiaLinks.

If you want to know more, read the part **ManiaScript in ManiaLinks**.

2.4 AddPlayerID vs. ManiaConnect

In TMF you had the possibility to use the attribute addplayerid in some elements to retrieve some information of the player currently viewing the ManiaLink. This feature is no longer available in ManiaPlanet, mostly because it was too easy to manipulate the submitted values, and that's why, so Nadeo, it is not compatible with the ManiaPlanet concept.

Instead of addplayerid Nadeo introduced a new mechanism called ManiaConnect to again get access to the player's data. With ManiaConnect, the player explicitly must confirm that he or she wants to publish the data to a certain ManiaLink, and only when done so, the ManiaLink will be able to retrieve this player's data. This new mechanism is completely secure and cannot be manipulated, which opens new possibilities: For example an AdminPanel now needs simply to check the retrieved login, as if this login is "m4rcel", it is definitely me visiting this ManiaLink (or somebody who hacked my account Biggrin). On the other side, we have to pay with a more complex way to get our hands on these data, making use of the ManiaPlanet WebServices.

In the last part of this Tutorial, a complete example of a **ManiaConnect Authentification** is given.

2.5 Other changes

Access of local files

Another new feature is the possibility, to directly access files stored on the local computer using the file:// prefix. The base directory is the ManiaPlanet folder, if you want to call e.g. a ManiaLink stored in Documents\ManiaPlanet\Media\ManiaLinks\test.xml, use file://Media/ManiaLinks/test.xml. The base path is virtual: It does not only point to the ManiaPlanet directory in your Documents, it also points to the game directory and the game cache. Simply try to call "file://Media/ManiaLinks/Solitaire/index.xml", which actually is located in one of the packs delivered with the game.

This feature is escpecially useful during the development of a ManiaLink: Instead of having it to upload each time to the server, you may call it directly from your hard drive, as long as the file is placed in the Media\ManiaLinks folder. Of course, when publishing a ManiaLink, all local references have to be removed and replaced by online references, as other players will not be able to request any local files

No Animations

ManiaPlanet does not support the animated Bink format (.bik) anymore, therefore there is no possibility to view any animations on the ManiaPlanet ManiaLinks. As direct consequence, the **<video> tag becomes deprecated** and has no meaning any longer in ManiaPlanet ManiaLinks.

UserAgent and other Header changes

ManiaPlanet does not use the UserAgent Gamebox any longer, instead a more detailled one is used: ManiaPlanet/3.0.0 (2011-09-14).
So next to simply know that ManiaPlanet is calling you, it tells you the exact version of the game. This may be helpful if new features of ManiaLinks get added (or bugs get fixed) in the future, so you now from the version if a certain feature is available or not.

As an additional information, the Header now contains an additional line Accept-Language, where the code of the language is specified, with which the game is running. Refer to the <dico> tag to see a list of available language codes.

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